

Application

of

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and

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for

Letters Patent of the United States

for

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR HOLDING
AND POSITIONING A PIPE DURING THE
INSTALLATION THEREOF

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**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR HOLDING
AND POSITIONING A PIPE DURING THE
INSTALLATION THEREOF**

RELATIONSHIP TO PRIOR APPLICATION

[0001] This is a U.S. non-provisional application relating to and claiming the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/463,303, filed April 15, 2003.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates to the installation of pipe; more particularly it relates to an apparatus which allows a single installer to install pipe. Drainpipe, water pipe and HVAC duct or pipe used in new construction or remodeling comes in long sections which must be pieced together. PVC drainpipe is often five (5) inches in diameter or larger, twenty (20) feet long and can weigh over one hundred (100) pounds. The installation of these long links of pipe normally requires two persons. One person holds the far end of the pipe adjacent to the ceiling while the other person attaches the other end of the pipe to a previously installed pipe. This adds to the labor costs involved in the installation of pipe.

[0003] U.S. Patent No. 5,024,403 issued to Carlston shows a device for assisting in the hanging of pipe in the form of a thin, narrow rectangular plate having sharp ends. The plate is adapted to be wedged between adjacent ceiling joists. Wedging is accomplished by hammering the plate so that the sharp ends bite into the ceiling joists. The free end of the pipe is placed between the ceiling joists and is supported by the plate to aid in the installation of the pipe. The use of the Carlston invention pre-supposes that the pipe is to be installed between adjacent ceiling joists, rather than under the ceiling joists. In addition, the Carlston device causes damage to the ceiling joists. Lastly, removal of the support plate from between the ceiling joists by a hammer can cause damage to the pipe.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In accordance with one form of this invention, there is provided an apparatus for enabling an elongated pipe to be installed below a ceiling using a single installer. A first jaw is provided and is adapted to temporarily support one end of the pipe. A fastener is provided for removably securing the apparatus to the ceiling. An extension device is provided for connecting the jaw to the fastener so that one end of the pipe may be temporarily supported at a distance from the ceiling and the installer may connect the other end of the pipe to another pipe.

[0005] In accordance with another form of this invention, there is provided a method for installing pipe below a ceiling using a single installer and utilizing an apparatus, including a first jaw, a fastener and an extension device connecting the first jaw to the fastener. The method includes the steps of attaching the apparatus to the ceiling using the fastener, placing one end of the pipe in the jaw so that one end of the pipe becomes suspended from the ceiling, and attaching the other end of the pipe to a previously installed pipe or to another connecting member.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] The subject matter which is regarded as the invention is set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, together with other objects and advantages thereof may be better understood taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

[0007] Figure 1 is a perspective view showing one embodiment of the invention with the jaws in the closed position.

[0008] Figure 2 shows a portion of the embodiment of Figure 1 with the jaws in the open position.

[0009] Figure 3 is a front elevational view of the embodiment of Figure 1 with the water pipe holder removed.

[0010] Figure 4 is a pictorial view showing the use of the pipe hanger of Figure 1.

[0011] Figure 5 shows a portion of an alternative embodiment of the invention.

[0012] Figure 6 shows an exploded view of the apparatus shown in Figure 3 but with the chain omitted.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0013] Referring now more particularly to Figure 1, there is provided pipe hanger 10 having a pair of rotatable jaws 12 and 14 each having first and second ends. As shown in Figure 1, jaws 12 and 14 are in the closed position, forming an enclosed space 16 which is adapted to receive one end 18 of elongated plastic drainpipe 20 as shown in Figure 4.

[0014] As shown in Figure 2, jaws 12 and 14 are in the open position so that the pipe may be attached to the hanger 10 without the need to pass end 18 of the pipe through opening 16. Jaw 12 is bifurcated; that is jaw 12 includes a first semi-circular curved element 22 and second semi-circular curved element 24. Gap 26 is formed between curved elements 22 and 24. Jaw 14 includes a single semi-circular curved element 28, portions of which are adapted to be received within a portion of gap 26 when the jaws are in a closed position as illustrated by Figure 1 and Figure 3.

[0015] A plurality of holes 32 are drilled through curved element 22 and a plurality of holes 34 are drilled through curved element 24. Pin 36 is attached to curved element 28 by a chain 38. Pin locking spring element 40 is attached to pin 36. The jaws 12 and 14 are held in the closed position and locked about pipe 20 by inserting pin 36 through the aligned holes 30, 32 and 34 of the respective curved elements so that the jaws are removably connected to one another. By utilizing more than one hole through each of the curved elements, the diameter of the circular space 16 is made adjustable so as to accommodate various diameters of pipe.

[0016] The hanger further includes an extension device which preferably is in the form of elongated rod 42. Rod 42 includes threads 44 located at the lower end. The hanger 10

further includes connection member 46, including a first plate 48 and a second plate 50. A threaded channel 52 extends between plates 48 and 50 and is adapted to receive and engage with threads 44 on rod 42. Curved elements 22 and 24 are rotatably attached to plate 48 and curved element 28 is rotatably attached to plate 50 by means of holes 51, 53 and 55 through the respective plates and curved elements with pins 57 and 59 being placed there through. The threads 44 enable one to make minor vertical adjustments to the position of jaws 12 and 14 and thus, the vertical position of opening 16 by rotating the jaws about the axis of rod 42.

[0017] A fastener, preferably in the form of clamp member 54, is attached to rod 42 towards the top of the rod. Clamp member 54 includes "C" clamp 56 having first setscrew 58 attached thereto. "C" clamp 56 is also attached to boss 60. Boss 60 includes a hole 61 there through for receiving a rod 42. Second setscrew 62 is attached to boss 60 and is able to make contact with rod 42 to hold clamp member 54 in place on the rod. This arrangement also enables jaws 12 and 14 and thus, pipe receiving opening 16 to be adjusted vertically along the length of rod 42 so as to enable major vertical adjustments. "C" clamp as shown in Figure 4, is adapted to engage with ceiling joist 64. Setscrew 58 holds the "C" clamp and thus, hanger 10 firmly to ceiling joist 64.

[0018] The hanger 10 is operated as follows:

the vertical distance between previously installed pipe 66 as shown in Figure 4 and ceiling joist 64 is measured or estimated by installer 68;

installer 68 then attaches hanger 10 to ceiling joist 64 by means of clamp member 54 at a distance from the free end 70 of a preinstalled pipe 66 of slightly less than the length of pipe 20;

in order for pipe 20 to be installed in the proper position, the distance between opening 16 of pipe hanger 10 and ceiling joist 64 is made equal to the

distance between pipe 66 and ceiling joist 64 by moving rod 42 through opening 61 in boss 60 and its position is then fixed by tightening setscrew 62 on to rod 42;

finer height adjustments may be done by rotating jaws 12 and 14 about the axis of rod 42 so that they move up rod 42 due to threads 44;

installer 68 then adjusts the diameter of opening 16 by moving rotatable jaws 12 and 14 to the appropriate position and aligning holes 30, 32 and 34 and inserting rod 36 there through so that the diameter of opening 16 is slightly larger than the diameter of pipe 20;

installer 68 may then place the end 18 of pipe 20 through opening 16 between jaws 12 and 14 of hanger 10 (alternatively, the installer may first open the jaws 12 and 14 as shown in Figure 2, place pipe 20 between the open jaws, and then close and fix the jaws as shown in Figure 1); and

installer 68 then places the end 72 of pipe 20 against end 70 of fixed pipe 66. Normally one end of one of the pipes is bell-shaped while the other end is a spigot so that the spigot end fits into the bell end. The installer may then glue or otherwise attach the pipes together. The installer then applies a permanent strap between end 18 of pipe 20 and ceiling joist 64. Pipe holder 10 is then removed from pipe 20 and the ceiling joist by the installer by removing pin 36 and opening the jaws as shown in Figure 2 and then releasing the "C" clamp 54 from the ceiling joist by rotating the setscrew 58 in the counter-clockwise direction. Thus, pipe 20 may be installed by a single person.

[0019] In the embodiment of Figure 5, "C" clamp 56 from Figure 1 is replaced with an "O" clamp 74. The "O" clamp includes a hollow pipe structure 76 having a setscrew 78 received therein. Pipe structure 76 is adapted to receive a small pipe 80. This "O" clamp structure enables one to use this pipe hanger 10 in situations where there are spaced apart bar joists just

below the ceiling. That is, pipe 80 is placed between the spaced apart bar joists and supported thereby.

[0020] Hanger 10 may also include water pipe support bracket 82 having hole 84 there through for receiving rod 42. Water pipe bracket 82 includes a first groove 86 for receiving and supporting a hot water pipe and a second groove 88 for receiving and supporting a cold water pipe. Thus, installer 68 may also use pipe hanger 10 to install hot and cold water pipes using the same techniques as used in the installation of drainpipe 20 as described above.

[0021] From the foregoing description of the embodiments of the invention, it will be apparent that many modifications may be made therein. It will be understood, however, that these embodiments of the invention are exemplifications of the invention only and that the invention is not limited thereto.